

West Hallam Green Belt/Affordable Housing Consultation Group Summary
Statement from the East Midlands Housing Association's West Hallam Feedback
Event held 18th July 2011

Consultation Group's Summary of Main Findings

The Consultation Group believe that the results of the Feedback Event are broadly representative of West Hallam resident's views on Affordable Housing provision in the village; specifically:-

- **While the majority of residents feel there is no need for Affordable Housing provision, there are a significant number who would give qualified support to some level provision where there is a proven need.**
- **That there is overwhelming opposition to any breach of the green belt.**
- **That the majority believe that no further investigations should be undertaken into developments on either the Beech Lane or High Lane West sites.**

Background

This Consultation Group was convened at a public meeting held at the West Hallam Village Hall on 6 July 2011. The meeting had been held in response to the outline proposal by Erewash Borough Council (EBC)/East Midlands Housing Association (EMHA) to provide Affordable Housing in the village with the possible intention of breaching the existing green belt to achieve this (notably on either of two possible sites on Beech Lane and on High Lane West). The loose brief of the Consultation Group was to examine the most effective way in which resident's views on the outline proposal could be made known.

The Consultation Group consisted of the following volunteering residents:-

Richard Walters – retired local government officer (group convener)

Ray Cowlshaw – retired local government officer

Dr Jeannie Alderdice – Lecturer

Robert Hall – Retired Solicitor

Dr Patrick Barber – Senior Lecturer

Andrew Varley – Teacher

Laura Gregory – Office Manager

Bruce Broughton - Retired local government officer, District and Parish Councillor

The Consultation Group met for the first time on 12 July 2011 to discuss their approach to the task.

Approach

The Consultation Group were aware that EMHA consultation/feedback event scheduled for 18 July 2011 was taking place whether residents liked it or not. Residents were invited to attend and express their views. Our prime concern was to ensure that any feedback EMHA gathered was based on the right questions, and that the actual questionnaire to be used wasn't biased. We achieved this by working with EMHA in securing a significant improvement in the questions seen on the first EMHA draft of the feedback form. Our aim was to ensure that, by ensuring the correct questions were asked, the results would demonstrate opposition to building in the Green Belt within EMHA's own survey. This was our agreed tactical approach and we were confident that if residents turned up in numbers they would have the full opportunity to voice their opposition using EMHA's own event, removing any possibility of EMHA being able to claim that there is no resistance or opposition to development in the Green Belt. Furthermore, should there be a need to subsequently extend the use of the same survey to further consult West Hallam residents, we should be able to further demonstrate, using EMHA's own methodology (i.e. the same questions), that there is near universal opposition proposals to build in the Green Belt.

Headline outcomes from the EMHA Feedback

Question 1 Do you think affordable homes should be provided in West Hallam for local people who need them?	Of those asked this question 59% stated that such provision was not needed. 34% would support some provision of Affordable Housing within the village
Question 2. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policy does allow the development of affordable homes for local people on “green belt” land. Would you support this to meet the need currently identified in West Hallam?	There was an overwhelming response opposing any development in the green belt, with 82% indicating their opposition to any such proposal.
Question 3 - So far, two possible sites have been identified (Beech Lane and High Lane West). Which do you think would be most appropriate to investigate further?	Once again the majority (72%) opposed any further investigation of the use for Affordable Housing on either of the currently identified sites (Beech Lane and High Lane West). It is somewhat surprising that of those favouring further investigation of the two sites, more favoured High Lane West (18%) than the Beech Lane site (4%).

n.b Full results may be viewed on the Parish Council website <http://www.westhallam-pc.org.uk/>

The Consultation Group's own analysis of the results may be found as an appendix to this summary statement.

Consultation Group's Conclusions

We believe that, through this approach, we have been able to ensure that the current views of the West Hallam residents on these proposals have been accurately reflected. In particular that:-

- **While the majority of residents feel there is no need for Affordable Housing provision, there are a significant number who give qualified support to some level provision were there is a proven need.**
- **That there is overwhelming opposition to any breach of the green belt.**
- **That the majority believe that no further investigations should be undertaken into developments on either the Beech Lane or High Lane West sites.**

The Consultation Group commend their approach up to this point. This approach has been able to demonstrate within EMHA own survey the near universal opposition to any proposals to develop Affordable (or any other) Housing that would breach the village green belt. As such, we believe that EMHA and EBC are now fully aware of residents confirmed views on these matters.

Suggested Future Actions

This Consultation Group has no further remit at this time beyond that of determining the most appropriate/effective means of undertaking consultations. We believe that any further actions should be referred back to, and endorsed by a future village meeting in the context of any future actions/proposals by EMHA/EBC.

However we would make the following recommendations to any future meeting:-

1. That the structure of any residents group addressing further actions should be

- properly constituted by that meeting (not necessarily incorporating members from the current Consultation Group)
2. That consideration be given to the use of professional support/advice and of the funding of same. During the course of its work the Group has been approached with offers of professional support and of an offer of support funding. These have not been pursued by the Group at this time because:-
 - ⤴ It was not felt to be within the current Group's remit
 - ⤴ It was not felt that these proposals had yet reached a point where such support was necessary.
 - ⤴ That such decisions were properly a matter for a future group formally constituted by a village meeting to consider.

Summary Update

EBC and EMHA have been approached by the Consultation Group in order to seek their current views, responses and future intentions regarding the findings of the Feedback.

EMHA responded on 18 August 2011, advising that they had forwarded the feedback results to EBC and were awaiting a 'steer' from the Council as to the further intentions on this matter. EMHA did add that they would keep the Consultation Group informed if there were any further developments.

A further response was received from EMHA's Regional Development Manager on 24 August which states:-

"We are working on 343 responses in total, whereas your report says 358 (have you taken the row count and not allowed for the rows forming spaces between groups?) I don't think it makes a substantial difference to the outcome. We had 497 visitors on the day, we had 10 enquiries regarding applying for the properties during the event, and 3 since the event.*

We have suggested to the Borough Council that in view of the comments and concerns expressed and the number of suggestions of alternative sites put forward by residents we should put further investigation of Beech Lane and High Lane West on hold whilst we investigate these alternative sites. I have informed the Parish Council of this and we are arranging for articles to this effect to go in the Ilkeston Advertiser and the Derby Telegraph. Erewash BC will also put something on their website. We have also asked the Parish Council if they can assist in communicating this proposal more widely.

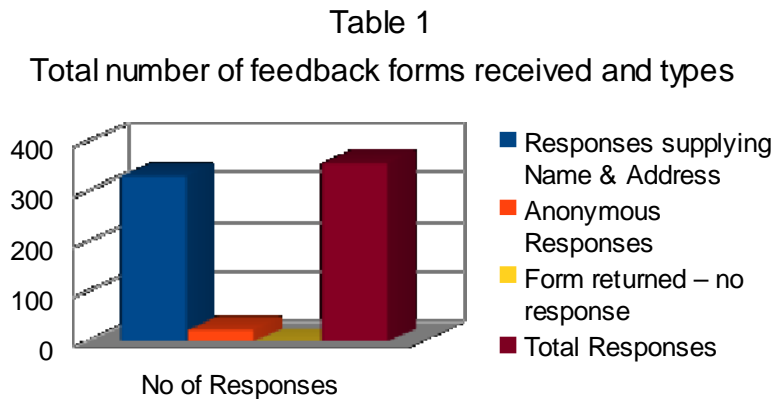
Also, at the Drop in Event I remember (Richard Walters) asking the specific question about the availability of funding and at that time we were waiting for the outcome of the bids for HCA grant. Since then, you may have heard that the East Midlands region has received a vastly reduced grant allocation for affordable housing. Our bid for funding for a scheme in West Hallam was not successful. We will have to bid again for grant whenever RSL's are invited to submit bids again.

In the meantime we will start to investigate the alternative sites and will keep the Borough and Parish Councils informed of our progress".

*The Consultation group based their figures on the data supplied by EMHA which showed the following – 332 response with name and address supplied; 25 anonymous responses; 1 response with no details.

Appendix - **East Midlands Housing Drop-In Day 18 July – Feedback Analysis**

1. Total Responses Received



Commentary - The total of 358 confirmed feedback responses does represent a significant statistical response and certainly is one that EMHA and Erewash regarded as the definitive and most up to date resident's perspective on any proposals to provide Affordable Housing in West Hallam and of the villages attitude to any breach of the green belt for such purposes. It will now be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for either EMHA or EBC to claim that there is no local objections to the proposals as they currently stand.

2. Question 1 - Do you think affordable homes should be provided in West Hallam for local people who need them?

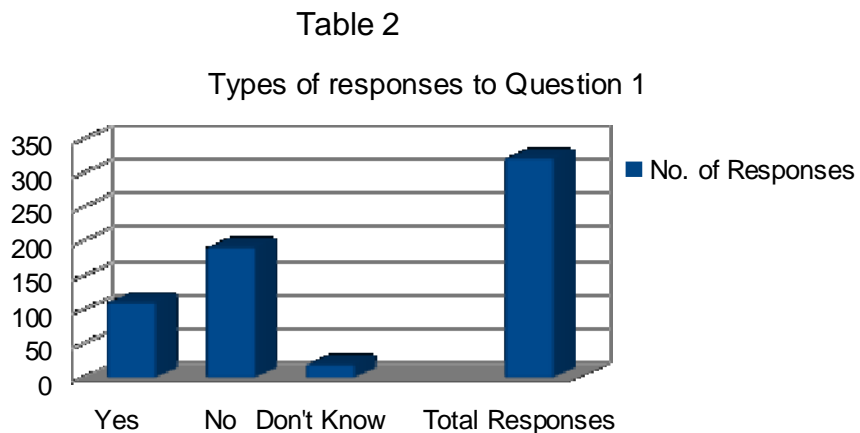
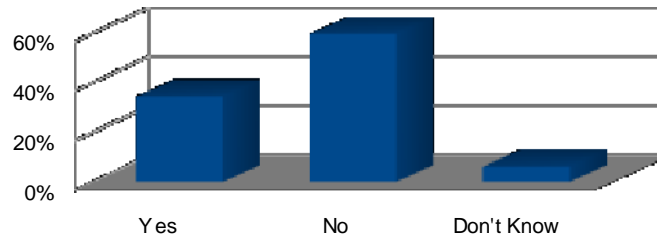


Table 3
Question 1 - % Responses



Commentary – The majority of those attending (59%) did not feel there was a need for Affordable Homes to be provided in the village. However there were a significant number (34%) who indicated that there such housing should be provided.

- Question 2- Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policy does allow the development of affordable homes for local people on “green belt” land. Would you support this to meet the need currently identified in West Hallam?

Table4

Types/Numbers of response to Question 2

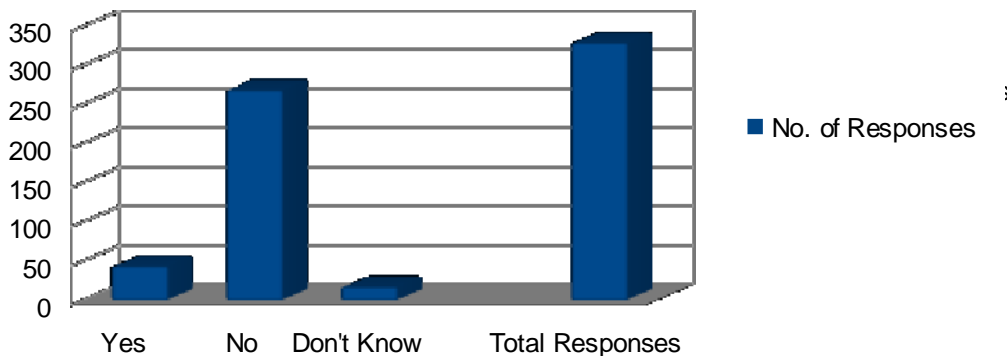
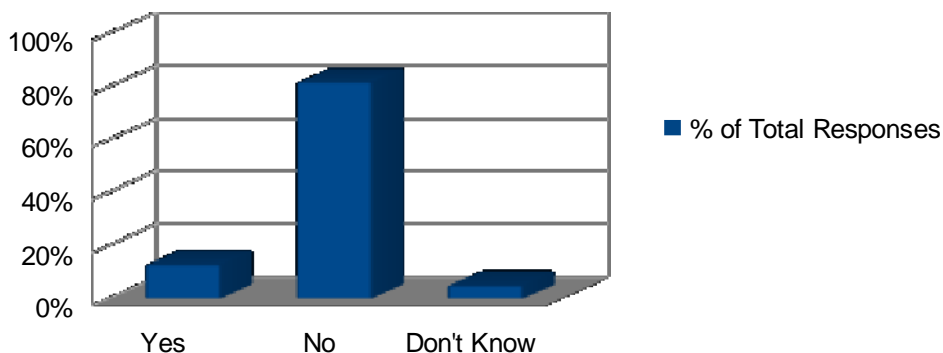


Table 5

Question 2 - % responses



Commentary – The vast majority (82%) were opposed to any use of the green belt to meet any need for affordable housing. A much smaller percentage (13%) would support such use.

- Question 3 - So far, two possible sites have been identified. Which do you think would be most appropriate to investigate further? Please indicate (tick box) below and say why:

Table 6

Types/number of responses to Question 3

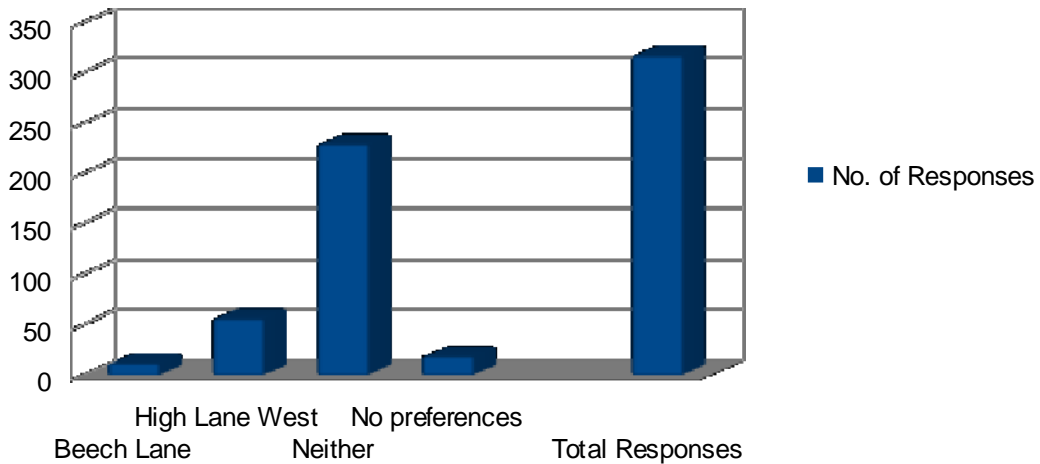
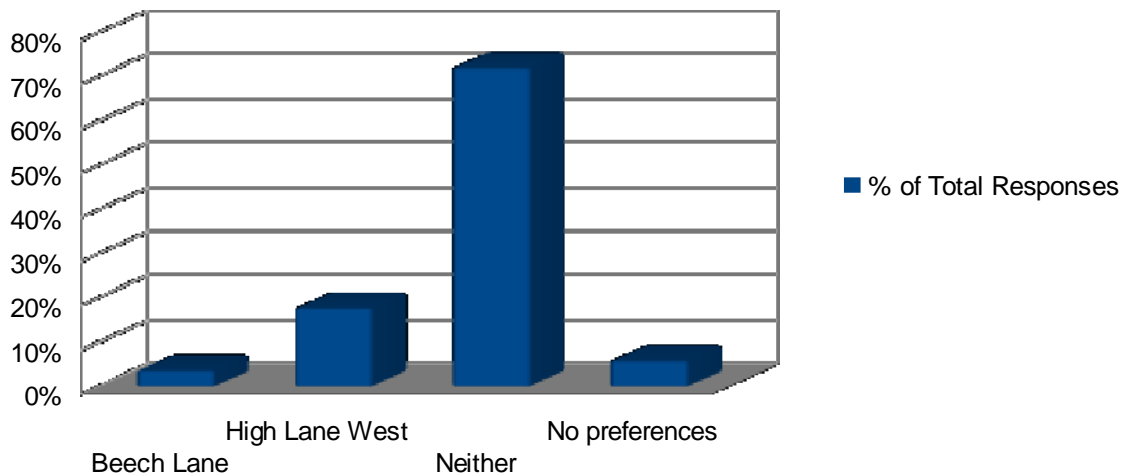


Table 7

Question 3 - % responses



Commentary – Once again the majority (72%) opposed any further investigation of the use for Affordable Housing on either of the currently identified sites (Beech Lane and High Lane West). It is somewhat surprising that of those favouring further investigation of the two sites, more favoured High Lane West (18%) than the Beech Lane site (4%). It is suggested that this may be accounted for by “concerns re traffic / congestion / proximity to school”, apparent in the 91 of the individual

comments received on the day see 5. below. The use of the Powtrell Pavilion on Beech Lane as the event venue might also have had some bearing!

5. EMHA have also provided some analysis on the individual comments and suggestions received. This is largely self explanatory and has not been subject to any further analysis at this stage.